



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

# Press Release

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## **REQUIREMENTS EASED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE AUTOMATED COMMERCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Washington, D.C.** — U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) today announced in the Federal Register the elimination of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) requirement to establish an account or participate in any Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) tests effective immediately. This action is intended to increase the usage of ACE, the new commercial trade processing system being developed by CBP to enhance border security and expedite legitimate trade.

“This in no way indicates that the support of CBP management for the C-TPAT program has diminished,” said Assistant Commissioner Jayson P. Ahern, Office of Field Operations. “C-TPAT participants will continue to realize specific benefits such as reduced examinations. Removal of the C-TPAT requirement for participation in ACE is intended to increase the usage of ACE so as to further streamline the commercial importation process, which will benefit both the importing community and CBP.”

The ACE will replace the current paper dependent and transaction oriented import system, the Automated Commercial System (ACS). The ACE will revolutionize how CBP processes goods imported into the United States by providing an integrated, fully automated information system to enable the efficient collection, processing, and analysis of commercial import and export data.

Importers, brokers and carriers are encouraged to apply for ACE accounts as soon as possible to ensure smooth operations when ACE participation is eventually made mandatory.

“As part of the process of making ACE the mandatory system of record throughout CBP, we need to make it accessible to as many people as possible,” said Acting Assistant Commissioner Rod MacDonald, Office of Information and Technology. “Easing the requirements will allow ACE to expand quickly.”

The CBP transition to account-based processing was launched in October 2003 with the ACE Secure Data Portal. This customized web page provides a single on-line access point to CBP systems. Periodic payment and statement features were introduced in June 2004. In December 2004, the first land border port was transitioned to ACE in Blaine, Washington. Over the next year, CBP plans to deploy ACE to all land border ports-of-entry that process commercial traffic.

For information about how to establish an ACE account, e-mail CBP at **acenow@dhs.gov**. Also, check for the latest updates for ACE application information on the CBP Web site at [www.cbp.gov/modernization/](http://www.cbp.gov/modernization/). Click on the logo or *Modernization & ACE*.

For more information on the Federal Register Notice and the C-TPAT program, please visit the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Web site at [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov).

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